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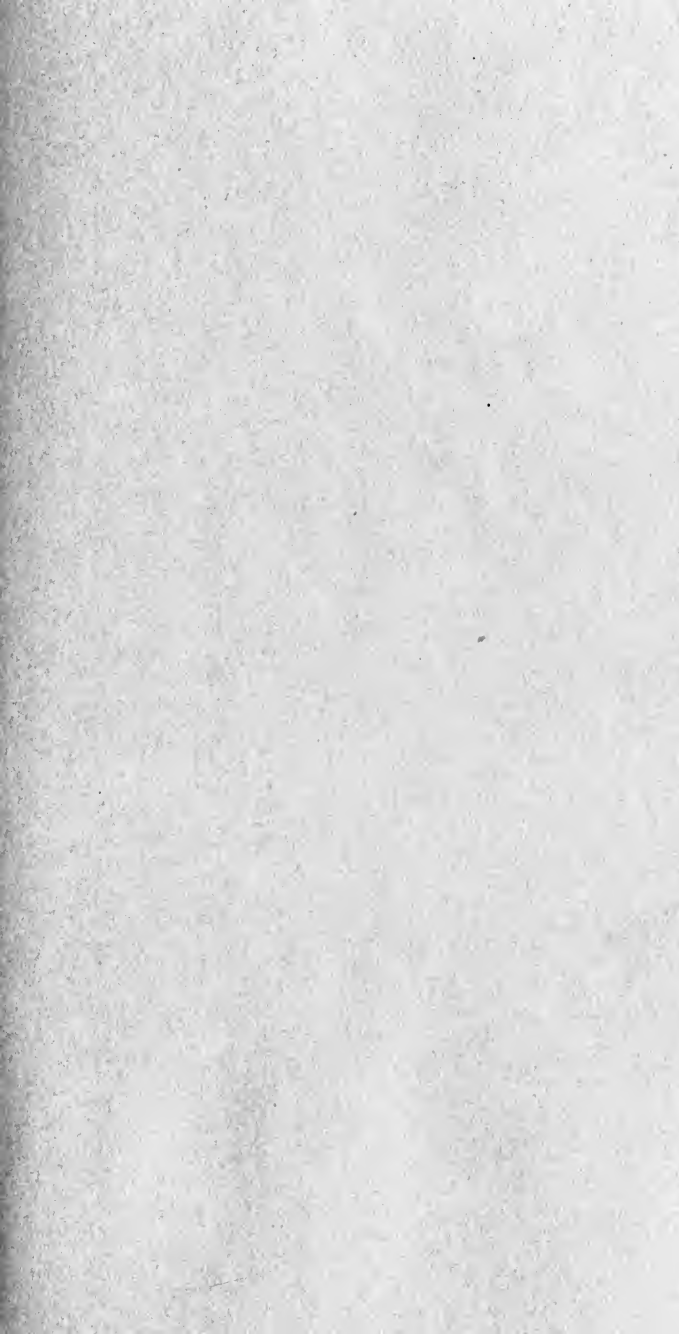


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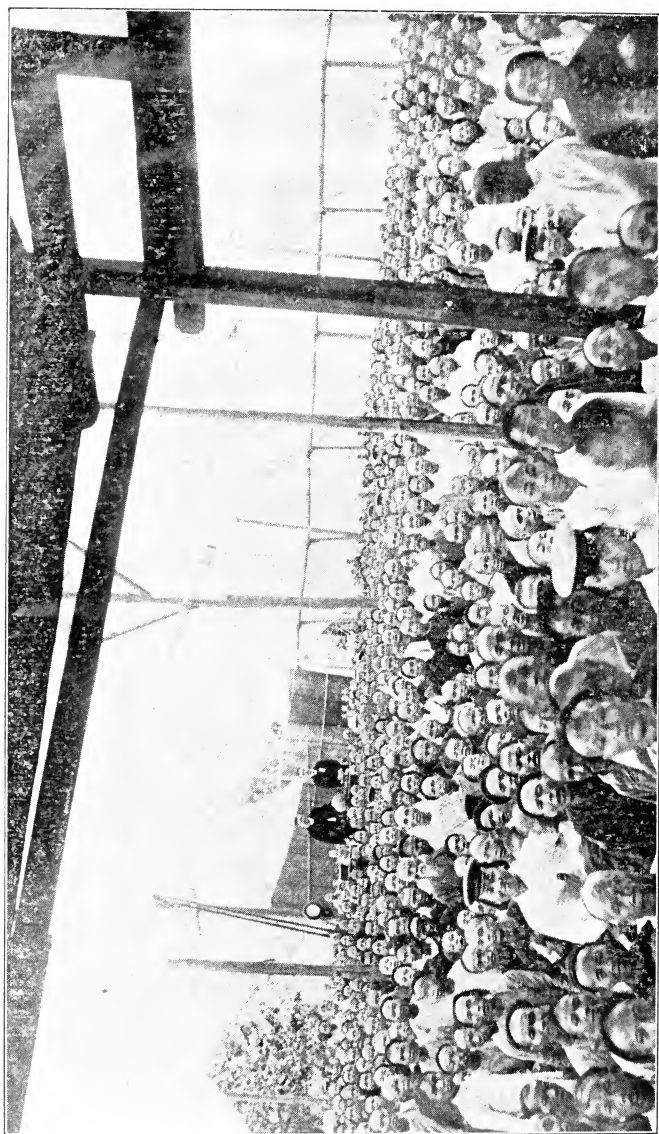


BREWSTER

A Modern Pentecost in South China







A Modern Pentecost in South China

BY WILLIAM NESBITT BREWSTER
A Missionary to the Chinese

With Introduction by WILSON S. LEWIS
Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church
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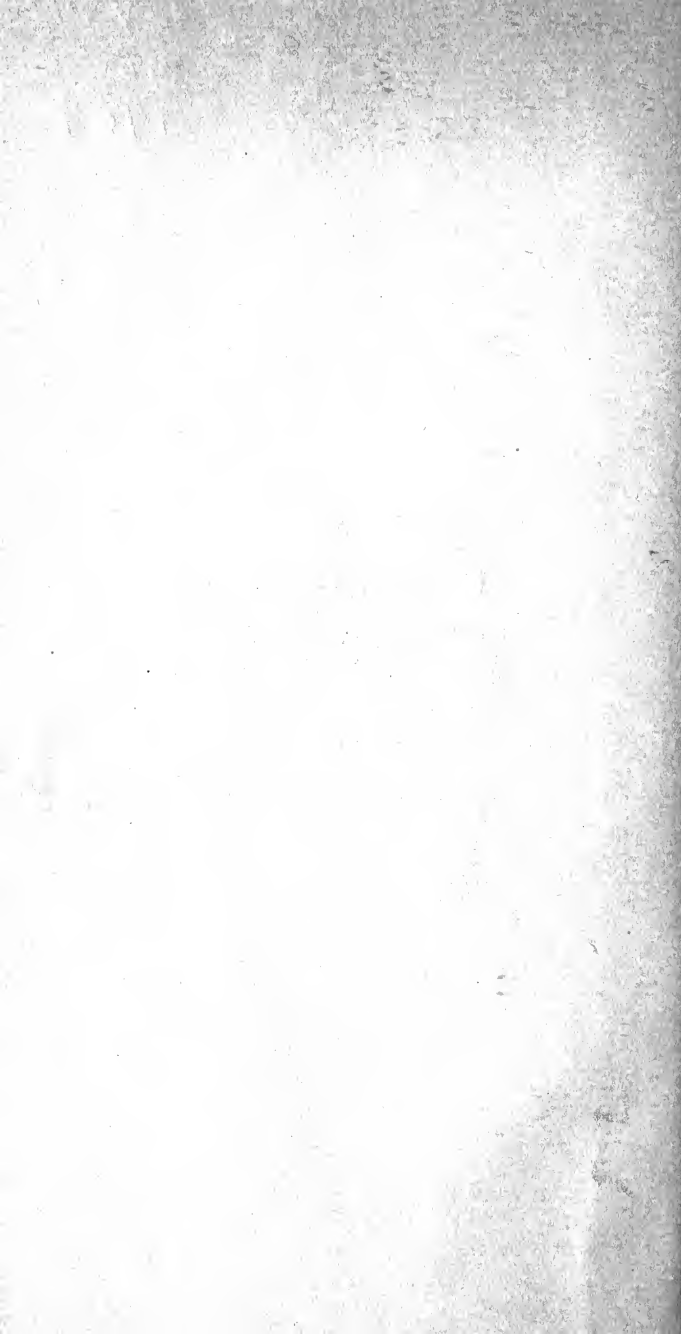
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DEDICATION

TO MRS. SARAH A. WILSON

Whose prayers have been so signally answered in the events that these pages attempt to describe, and to all such intercessors for the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the Christless Nations, these pages are gratefully dedicated.



Introduction

To realize the purposes of God in the realm of the spirit and to voluntarily root them in the moral life, is to become workers together with Christ. The age long earthward pull of the "world, the flesh and the devil" is a constant force tending to separate the spiritual truths of religion from the moral life.

Sin, having blinded the eyes of the spirit, so that "the light within became darkness," has separated the soul from the bosom of God. Men and nations in this condition substitute vain imaginations for the knowledge of the glory of God, and the wisdom of His counsels is displaced by the deductions of a disorganized reason. "The glory of the incorruptable God is changed into an image like to corruptable man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and to creeping things." In that uncleanness was substituted for purity and lust of the flesh for love in the spirit, the image of God was blurred and "they changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the creator." "Because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge in the night of their forgetfulness "God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient."

"They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity: whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of

evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.”

These terrible words constitute the indictment not of the Chinese nation and people only, but of all nations and men of all ages who have persistently refused the bright shining of God’s face. Not until our race had spurned the glory of His promise in the heart, did God span the sky with the eternal symbol of His deathless love.

The following pages constitute a faithful record of the wonder working transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. Lives blighted by the opium habit, souls cursed by greed and crime, were inspired, redeemed by that eternal Spirit whose name is Love. Hoary customs, which as with thongs of brass bound the most sacred gifts of God upon the altar of covetousness, were burned away by the fire of the Spirit, while in their place were planted those lofty ideals which personify the nature and character of God.

In such works of grace as are recorded in the following pages God sets His seal to the unity of the race and to his purposes to establish righteousness among the nations of the earth. The principles of the Sermon on the Mount will not be effectually recorded in the laws of the land until they are realized in the hearts of the people. The prophets of the Lord have ever been the eyes of the nations. China has waited long for God-sent seers, men whose hearts were touched with the spirit of the Highest, and whose minds were saturated with the sanity of Jehovah. She needs these more than she needs armies, or navies, or diplomats.

There is evidence in these pages that God has heard the unspoken prayer and has felt the need of this great people. The Spirit came not in the power of men, nor in wisdom of men, but according to the purpose and plan of God. In the prayers and agonizing tears of the chosen few in the prefecture of Hinghwa, we catch a glimpse of that going forth which in its fullest expression shall fill the hills and mountains and valleys of China with glorious praise.

And the nation shall lift up her head when the hearts of her people have been cleansed.

WILSON S. LEWIS.



A Modern Pentecost in South China

1. Preparation

When did it begin? It must have been decades ago, when Maclay, Sites, Baldwin, Ling Cing-ting and the other heroic pioneers laid broad and deep the foundations upon which their successors are building. But when the news of the Revival in Wales reached us how eagerly our more spiritual Chinese leaders listened to the story. When it spread to India, our Hinghwa semi-monthly newspaper, prophetically called the "Revivalist," often re-told the story that so filled the pages of the *Indian Witness* in those Jubilee days: but still it seemed far away. Then the news from Korea set our hearts throbbing. Here were great numbers, not only of the people of Asia, just out of paganism, but of the Mongolian race, upon whom the Holy Spirit fell "even as upon us at the beginning. Then Manchuria was all aflame; North China caught the fire! Shall South China be passed by? The Chinese religious press teemed with accounts of revivals in the North. We consulted together about choosing two Chinese delegates to go to Manchuria and bring from there a live coal from off the altar, that our iniquity might be taken away and our sin purged. Various names were mentioned, and at one time it was almost decided whom to send. There would have been no difficulty in securing funds for the expenses, but the Holy Spirit himself desired to show us a more excellent way. All the time He was not far from any one of us.

It was in July, 1907, when the Korean Revival was thrilling the world, that about one hundred Chinese preachers met in Hinghwa City for their usual mid-year examinations, and annual literary meeting. But it was far more than a series of scholarship tests. There was unusual heart-searching, and importunate prayer, especially at the meetings before breakfast. One young man particularly made a most humble confession of having cheated in one of his Conference examinations, and of unchristian feelings toward his brethren. The meeting was prolonged for a day or two more than had been originally planned, and with much profit to many. The most permanent result was seen in the life of this young man, who had been for several years a very efficient and faithful assistant in editing the local church newspaper and in managing the affairs of the Mission Press. Really he seemed to be simply indispensable in this capacity.

At the session of the Annual Conference in November, 1908 it was very strongly impressed upon the writer that he should give up this invaluable assistant, and nominate him for the pastorate of the church in Hinghwa City. This seemed all the more remarkable because Mr. Na had never had any experience as a pastor, and this is a church with members, probationers and inquirers aggregating more than fifteen hundred. The young man himself begged to be spared this great responsibility: but this was an appointment made in heaven, and it stood. In this spirit of humility he began his work. He gave close attention to the most minute details of church organization, but did not depend upon these things. His preaching was simple and searching;

loving, but he did not spare. As the winter wore away it was noticed that congregations, always large, were taxing the capacity of the church, though fully one thousand could be accommodated by close seating. Yet there were no outward signs of what was so near at hand. Perhaps no ear amongst us all, not even his, was sensitive enough to detect the "sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry trees" that told of the approaching battle with the powers of darkness and of the victory.

About the middle of March the pastor spoke to the writer of this chronicle about having special revival meetings this spring. He believed the time would be opportune and suggested the three days from Good Friday to Easter inclusive, as a suitable time to begin and then continue if the interest seemed to justify it. The missionary said he hoped that it would be so; but the truth must be told, he had less faith for an outpouring of the Spirit then than he had had for years. The outlook never seemed to him more disheartening.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
But unto thy name give glory."

Later it was learned that the pastor, soon after this discouraging conversation with the missionary, became so burdened for a Revival that he spent two successive days in prayer and fasting, and he prevailed. The prayer was with closed door, the fasting with anointed head, seen only of the Father, but the recompense has been open and abundant.

II. Beginnings

It was the night commemorating the betrayal and arrest of our Lord, Thursday, April 8th, at the regular weekly prayer-meeting, that the first faint signs appeared that God was about to rebuke our little faith by giving more than most of us had dared to ask.

The leader presented the thought that the keenest sorrow to our Redeemer during the sad hours of that fatal night had been caused by the faithlessness of his own disciples. They began by quarreling as to who should occupy the seats of honor; Judas betrayed him, and that with a kiss; Peter denied him, even with oaths; while the best of them went fast asleep three times in spite of his importunity that they watch as he bore the sins of a lost world upon his heart. Who of us, his disciples had not done as badly or worse? At least we too had slept, and that not for hours but for years at a time, while the Master agonized. It seemed to be a message to hearts not a few. The prayers that followed were different. That was all.

The next morning at eleven o'clock a special Good Friday Service was held. The pastor told in simple narrative the story of the Passion of our Lord, and showed how our sins nailed Him again to the Cross. He then announced an evening meeting at seven, and asked that those who wished to abstain from the evening meal, and pray, would come to the church at six o'clock and spend the hour in prayer for the meeting to follow. Perhaps thirty or forty came at the appointed time, and the spirit of prayer was importunate and incessant. At seven

o'clock probably two hundred were in the house, and many more came until there were about four hundred. Calvary was again the subject, the only theme for such a day, and when testimonies were called for, one of the most zealous of the students in the Biblical School, who had been present at the six o'clock meeting and had been greatly burdened in prayer, arose and said that he had a confession to make: As treasurer of the committee on entertainment of the District Conference, he had twenty cents left over after all bills were paid, and he had not turned it back to the pastor. Also, two years ago the preachers on the circuit where he had been serving as a student-pastor had divided up amongst themselves a sum of money, which was obtained in a lawsuit affair, and he had received two dollars.* He said he would get this money as soon as possible and give it to the church. Such a confession and restitution could not fail to stir many consciences. There were signs that the times of refreshing were near at hand, if not already here.

At the close of the meeting, those who desired to meet to pray for themselves or others were asked to come to the church for half an hour at six o'clock the next morning. About two hundred were present at or before the appointed time, many of whom were in tears. It was here that the student who had made confession the previous night brought the two dollars and twenty cents that burdened his

*Silver or Mexican dollars are meant in this and all cases where not otherwise stated. Of late the value of one Mexican dollar is about forty-five cents American currency.

conscience and laid it upon the communion table in the presence of all.

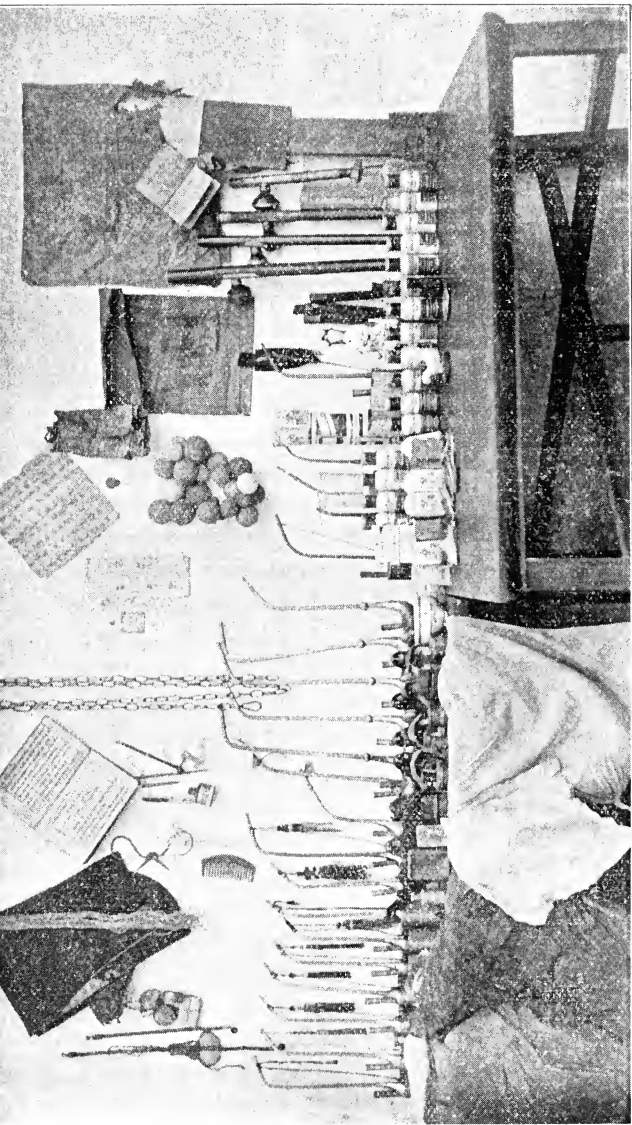
The Easter program by the children did not seem to disturb the impressions of the days of our Lord's suffering for our sins. Still so dull of sight were we, that even yet we did not plan nightly services, but only a daily meeting before breakfast. These continued increasing in power and numbers until on Saturday at least five hundred were in the church at a quarter past five, and the meeting was closed with difficulty at nearly eight o'clock. The interest at these early meetings was so great that it was announced on Wednesday morning that the church would be open all day for prayer for any who chose to come, and the pastor and others would be there as much of the time as they could, to counsel and pray with seekers for pardon of their sins. All day long, day after day they came singly or more generally in groups; almost continuously there would be from twenty to one hundred in different parts of the church praying or counseling with their spiritual leaders, confessing their sins, and making restitution for wrongs done, so far as was in their power. Never were seekers for pardon dealt with more faithfully. Lovingly and clearly were the besetting sins of each pointed out and the way of the Cross made plain.

By the middle of this week it seemed impossible to postpone longer the beginning of meetings every night. With no previous announcement except the ringing of the bell the church was well filled on Wednesday night. Saturday night a small committee was to meet at the church. The doors were opened, and lamps lighted, but the bell was not rung. When

the members of the committee arrived at the church the house was full, and an impromptu meeting was in progress, which proved to be one of the best of the week. Never was there a Revival more manifestly not of man's planning, but of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

III. Fruits Meet for Repentance

It was during this second week of the Revival that an event occurred which had much to do with shaping the type of work done by the Holy Spirit during the weeks that followed. One of the most earnest members of the church in Hinghwa City, a successful business man, had been in the greatest distress for several days. He feared that he had committed the "unpardonable sin." Close questioning regarding his business methods and practices brought out the sad fact that he and his partners had in stock over a dozen bottles of morphine, brought in before the prohibition of its importation. The original cost was about sixty dollars but the present commercial value was not less than three times that sum. They were planning to use it in so-called "opium-cure pills." The deadly character of the drug in this capacity was not fully understood by them. When the nature of this sin was pointed out, this penitent man went at once to see his partners, nearly all of whom were Christians, and in less than two hours their entire stock of this drug, along with a lot of American and English cigarettes, were brought to the church, and turned over to the pastor to be destroyed. They might have sold it secretly to another dealer at large profit and no one have been the wiser: but the Spirit of God was dealing with awakened consciences, and nothing can be hid from Him. To understand what this meant to them financially, the Occidental reader must multiply the above figures by ten, call it gold, and apply the result, eighteen hundred dollars, to an ordinary merchant in a country town in America.



FRUITS MEET FOR REPENTANCE: A FEW TROPHIES OF THE REVIVAL IN HINGHWA, CHINA

While these men were bringing forth these fruits meet for repentance, a man who had been in their employ until recently came to the church and in their presence confessed that a year ago he had cheated his employers out of four dollars, and expressed his purpose to restore to them double. He went away and returned shortly with ten dollars. The employers said that their accounts for that year were closed, and they agreed to turn this money to a church building enterprise that is now going on in the home village of two of them. It transpired that during the next day other employees became so convicted for their past dishonesty that they voluntarily confessed and paid back to the firm sums that fully covered the original cost of the morphine and cigarettes destroyed !

But time would fail to tell of the pennies and dimes, pencils and books, stolen or picked up and not returned to the owner ; confessions of sin covering every one of the Ten Commandments, one of the most frequent being the seventh ; reconciliations of enemies, scores of them, which took place in public and in private, until everybody seemed to be everybody's friend, and the very atmosphere to be charged with love and good will.

IV. Spreading to the Regions Beyond

Sunday, the eighteenth of April, was a great day in Zion. Not only was it a day of power and blessing in Hinghwa City, but the Biblical students and others carried the news to their appointments far and near. It was like fire in dry stubble. Most notable was the immediate effect at Sienyu, an important station, a day's journey a-foot from Hinghwa City. It is a country town, has been the headquarters of a large district for more than a dozen years, has a large Woman's Hospital, a Boarding School for girls and one for women, as well as a good school for boys. Five missionaries of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society are located there, but none of the Board of Foreign Missions. After the great meeting of Saturday morning, three of the Biblical students, who are Sienyu boys, asked permission to go home for the Sunday. A Chinese member of the Conference, who teaches in the Girls' Boarding School at Hinghwa, Mr. King, had occasion to go to Sienyu to have his eyes examined. These four no sooner arrived than they began to tell the story that had so filled their hearts. The pastor, a classmate of Mr. Na of the Hinghwa City church, and no less able in every way, begged them to tell it to his people at the quarterly testimony meeting the next morning. Each was to describe a particular feature of the work of the past ten days. The simple narration stirred the congregation beyond the power of any eloquence. At the close of the afternoon baptismal and sacramental service, the boys of the school met for prayer, and not a few

confessed their sins and restored things that did not belong to them. There was a deep stirring of hearts at the Epworth League service in the evening, and they too began the before-breakfast meeting Monday morning.

That same Monday morning (April 19th) Bishop Bashford arrived at Hinghwa with several of the other missionaries who had been necessarily detained at Foochow. That evening he preached and the testimony meeting that followed was full of power. The good news from Sienyu was told by the above mentioned teacher, and all realized that the Revival would spread. The next morning Bishop Bashford started on his long overland journey to Ingang, the extreme western point of the Conference, a ten days' journey distant. He must needs go through Sienyu. After preaching at a quarterly meeting on the way, he arrived at Sienyu in good season. The evening meeting was quiet but deeply heart-searching. The Bishop dealt plainly with the people from the text: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When he closed, the pastor arose and made a confession of having practiced grave deception in a church affair of two years ago. The matter was most serious, and the confession was followed by the deepest contrition and agonizing prayer for pardon of God and man. Immediately following, the district superintendent arose and confessed to having received eight dollars for aiding in the settlement of an affair between two quarreling parties. The money was in no sense a mission or church fund, but he realized that receiving such fees was an injury to himself and his work, and he

declared his intention to give it back to be used for church purposes in any way the authorities might sanction. The teacher of the Boys' School then followed with a confession of having failed, as church steward, to turn into the treasury one dollar, which had been paid in after the accounts of last year had been closed ; also of carelessness regarding the smaller items of sundries, and expressed his desire fully to reimburse the church by an additional dollar.

'Tis needless to say that such contrition and humility of their chief pastors profoundly affected the whole congregation. There was no demonstration ; the feeling seemed too deep for words. Other leading teachers, men and women, told of their sins, and their grief. The meeting closed at nine o'clock, to begin again at five in the morning. At this early meeting the pastor made further confession of shortage in church accounts. The Bishop was present for a few minutes at the close, and helpfully explained a passage of Scripture. Immediately after breakfast he started on his journey.

About the middle of the forenoon the writer heard a noise in the church like the roar of a cataract ; as it continued for some time, he went in to see what was the matter. The boys of the school were there with their head teacher and the pastor. The students were all sobbing and praying together, but there was no confusion, no hysteria. They were convicted of sin and were praying for pardon. Each was pleading audibly for himself. After a while the pastor urged them to be quiet while he pointed out the way of the Cross for relief. One after another told in simple language the story of his sins, and each had his own individual account to give. Many of them went back to the teacher

to beg his forgiveness for disobedience, and master and pupil would kneel down together and pray to the Father for pardon and peace. When the meeting was closed, the pastor explained what had occurred shortly before the missionary came in and immediately before the great noise above referred to. About a year ago two improper anonymous letters had been written and sent to a pupil in the Girls' Boarding School. Investigation pointed to two of the students in the Boys' School as the guilty parties. While they denied it, the evidence seemed so conclusive that they were punished. At this meeting the guilty boy, neither of the two suspected and punished, had confessed and in heart-broken contrition had begged forgiveness of his companions whom he had so grievously wronged by keeping silence while the innocent were being punished for his sin.

That night these three preachers, district superintendent, pastor and teacher, each brought to the communion table a sum of money in restitution for shortage in accounts and corrupt administration, each again declaring his penitence and faith that the merciful Saviour had pardoned his transgression. Surely the work of the Holy Spirit would go on under such leadership ; and it did, as the following letter from the pastor, written ten days later, clearly shows :

“ DEAR TEACHER :

The Revival at this place is truly increasing more than I can tell you. Every night more than four hundred come together ; early every morning more than two hundred are in the meeting, and at every service there are people confessing their sins with weeping. Some confess to having stolen, others to unfilial

treatment of parents. Many confess to smoking tobacco, and drinking wine, and others to using opium, gambling and all the vices. Both men and women have confessed to adultery, and confessions have been with loud weeping, and smiting of breasts in grief.

Up to the present time I have received eight tobacco pipes, two opium outfits, and more than one hundred and forty dollars from Na Ceo-ing, half of which is money recovered in a lawsuit for a debt in the soap industry, only a part of which he turned into the treasury; he now sends this money to be credited to that account. Another member has given me his gun. At our daily meetings night and morning there is the voice of praise and joy, but mingled with this is still the sound of weeping and sorrow.

Also at Dua-eong (on this circuit) they have begun revival meetings, and a great many have repented. I am now sending an account of the revival in the Girls' School, to publish in the 'Revivalist,' and later will send a description of other features of the great awakening.

Hoping that you and your family have great peace,

Your loving pupil,

GONG GUANG-DENG."

V. Planning Largely

While the writer was absent at Sienyu, the Hinghwa City people began a movement to extend the Revival to all parts of the Conference. The proposition was to invite a large number of representative members and workers from all sections to come together for a three or four days' meeting. An impromptu subscription had been taken at a morning meeting, and sixty or seventy dollars had been subscribed in a very few minutes. Later the plan crystalized into definite shape, and invitations were sent out to all the pastors, teachers and Bible-women, and four delegates, two men and two women, from each circuit. These were to be provided with entertainment from Thursday afternoon until Monday morning ; time, Pentecostal week, May 27th to 31st. The idea was an original and beautiful one, that as the Revival began in passion Week so it should culminate in Pentecost. Committees were appointed early and the details were carefully considered and provided for, but the chief note of preparation was one of prayer. The pupils of the Training School for Bible-women asked the Principal that they might be permitted to fast three times a week for the four weeks until the meeting, and the money thus saved go towards the entertainment of the guests. The fasting was to be accompanied by special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the invitation all pastors, a hundred or more, were urged to begin at once nightly meetings for prayer for themselves and the Pentecostal Meeting. This was done in scores of places.

VI. Ploughing Deep.

In the meantime the meetings in Hingwa City continued nightly, with group meetings in various schools and also at the church, before breakfast. Bishop Lewis arrived Saturday night, May 1st, and preached a very effective and appropriate sermon the next morning. He was with us until the following Thursday morning, every day visiting the schools and attending the meetings, and in every case his word was with power.

It soon became clear that the work must be educational as well as inspirational. In a Christian land the point of attack is almost exclusively the will, for there is the place of resistance. But in a genuine revival in a Christless land if the fruits remain, there must be much of instruction. Each true penitent, whether in a Christian or a pagan land, confesses up to his light, repents and believes, and receives peace and pardon. With those brought up under Christian influences, this is generally one distinct experience, while here in a non-Christian environment, it becomes a series of them. The light that comes reveals more sins unrealized before, and these too must be confessed and pardoned. It was noticed that few of the students confessed to the sin of cheating in recitations and examinations, yet this was the one almost universal sin. The thing was so common that conviction for its sinfulness seemed absent. During the third week attention was called to this sad fact and how exceeding sinful is all deception and falsehood. It became clear in the next few days that the message had gone deep. Students saw that this

religion of Jesus meant for them complete reconstruction of every feature of life. One by one they made the surrender. For several days the burden of confession and of prayer was for salvation from all falsehood in everyday life. For example: The merchant, who had given up the morphine, had planned to go to Shanghai to purchase a stock of goods. The iniquitous revenue service for China's interior, he affirmed was such that it was impossible to bring goods in and compete with his rivals without misrepresentation as to values and such like falsehood. He therefore determined not to go at all. He declared, "I will not engage in business in which I must tell lies." He and his partners planned to modify their lines of trade to fit their new conscience, rather than follow the opposite method, which is too common even in Christian lands.

VII. Student Evangelists

Tuesday, the 4th of May, brought inspiring news from Sienyu. The previous Saturday, at the importunate request of the students themselves, they, boys and girls and women, were allowed to go "to their own house unto their friends, and tell them how great things the Lord had done for them, and how He had mercy on them." These little bands of Spirit baptized messengers went into cold village churches and in less than two days set them on fire. On Saturday they went to their pagan neighbors, and hundreds came to the services on Sunday who had never attended any Christian worship before. Of course, the proprieties of Eastern social customs were observed, the girls and women going to the women with their message, the boys and young men to the men. At a point between Hinghwa city and Sienyu two groups met. The girls and women of Huadeng have gone to Sienyu to school, while the boys have come to Hinghwa. Without any prearrangement, they met on Saturday at this important village center. The faithful pastor happened to be absent on an important commission for the district superintendent. Nothing daunted, these young converts began their work of testimony. There were few signs of encouragement until Sunday afternoon; by night there was a general breaking down and confession by the members, and the interest was so great among all classes, non-Christians as well as Christians, that they could not leave on Monday on account of the importunities of the people. One of the fierce persecutors of the church there confessed Christ and surrendered to Him

during these days. He had been a zealous member of the "Three Religions Society," so called because their founder sought to combine into one system the most spiritual features of the three national religions of China. This religious sect is numerous and influential in Hinghwa, made up largely of real seekers after spiritual truth. We have good reason to believe that the spiritualized church will reach great numbers of these people, and experience teaches us that they make the very best Christians.

The report of the work of the Sienyu students intensified the already widespread longing among the pupils in Hinghwa to carry the good news to all parts of the district. The weather turned very stormy on Thursday, but in spite of the watery clouds several parties started to distant places on Friday, and on Saturday, May 8th, a great many more went in spite of the pouring rain. Their clothes were soaked but their ardor was undampened. Sunday the weather was a little better and Monday it cleared. A packed house on Monday and again on Tuesday nights listened with breathless interest for nearly two hours each evening to accounts of the Spirit's power told in simple narrative, sometimes by little children, again by older boys and girls, by members, teachers and preachers.

VIII. After-Meetings

We soon found that even two meetings a day did not give time enough for the penitent confessions and requests for prayer, and an after-meeting each evening for such was a necessity. From a score to a hundred would stay every evening. Here the heart to heart confessions and prayers seemed to bring the Master Himself into our midst with the comforting assurance, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." And it was needed. One man confessed to having been a leader in the great Anti-dynastic society of China. He brought his own official certificate of appointment as local head of this seditious organization and one hundred and fifty membership tickets, which he had been selling, and gave them to the pastor. This man formerly had been a probationer and was dropped for gambling. Only two months ago he had driven his own father away from home with a knife, one of the highest crimes in China except actual patricide.

A student who had sowed an abundant crop of "wild oats", who seemed to be deeply penitent had made a very humble and apparently thorough confession before the whole congregation, arose one Monday evening and said: "I went out last Saturday with a company of fellow-students, but found that my words were without power to convict sinners. I asked myself why, and remembered one great sin that I had shrunk from confessing, partly because it involved others; but I realized that I would do so at my first opportunity. Upon making this decision, I at once found that there was power in

my testimony. I and three others saw a backslidden church member gambling in a den. We boldly told him of his sin and urged him and his companions to cease. Not only did they heed, but the keeper of the den himself promised us that he would immediately quit his infamous business''. The confession this penitent boy made was sad enough: Last year a young preacher, who was doing badly and who was expelled at Conference time, had just drawn his quarterly allowance, and this student had proposed to two others that they decoy this young preacher to a gambling den and do him out of his quarter's salary. This they had done their best to accomplish and had gambled all night, but their net winnings from him had been only thirty cents. Certainly the Revival came none too soon! These three young "confidence men" are now among the most zealous of the volunteer band of student evangelists.

IX. Liberating Opium Slaves

"The lost sheep of the house of Israel" were naturally the first care of these newly called disciples. They began with the young prodigals of Christian families who were the victims of opium. A fund was quickly raised, and arrangements made with Dr. Taylor, of the Church of England Missionary Society Hospital, to treat them while breaking off this fearful vice. In a few days there were seven backslidden Methodists in one ward, four of whom were sons of former preachers, and one had been himself a preacher for a short time. Most of them realized that repentance must include all their sins, not merely this one that had enslaved them. They had prayer-meetings together night and morning, and as the pains of the cracking chains would come upon one and another, he would call upon his companions to help him with prayer. Often in the dead of night they would be called up for this ministry. Non-Christian opium patients were converted under their influence. One of the greatest sufferers was a literary graduate of very brilliant powers. His first words after his release, when he saw the writer, were: "As soon as I am strong enough, I want to go out every Saturday and Sunday to do evangelistic work wherever I can." Subsequently he was appointed general class leader to look after all these reformed opium smokers, with several zealous assistants. The possibilities of this man's usefulness are simply limitless. We have no abler mind, nor one better stored with Scripture truth. He has transliterated the whole Bible from the Chinese Character into the Hinghwa colloquial.

Later, this feature of the Revival had a remarkable development, hundreds of these men being saved from the living death of this fearful bondage.

X. A Timely Repentance With A Sequel

Even the sixth week, May 9th, to 16th, showed no abatement in zeal and results. From Hinghwa City eight or ten bands went out with the glad tidings. Those going to the more distant points left on Friday in spite of the drenching rain, which fortunately cleared the next day. At Hankong an important local seaport and the head of a district, the large church was crowded. At the close of the morning service any who were so disposed were asked to remain to the afternoon meeting, spending the hour in fasting and prayer and consultation regarding the way of salvation. About one hundred remained. At a meeting for women only, held at this time in one part of the church, there was a remarkable spirit of conviction and repentance. Here a young woman, the wife of a Foochow merchant in business at Hankong, with deep penitence confessed her sins. She had been a teacher in the Girls' Boarding School of the Anglican Mission in Foochow, and among other things that troubled her she remembered four dollars in her possession that rightfully belonged to the Mission. She expressed her intention of returning this money by the first opportunity with a letter confessing the fault. That same night she was taken suddenly ill, and at the hospital she passed away on the Wednesday following.

The next day Mr. Carson, one of our missionaries, in talking on business to one of the local preachers employed in the work, related this incident. This preacher had been regarded as one of the least useful of all our hundred men, and, unknown to him, it had been agreed with the district superintendent that he be discontinued at the close of this year. In the

meeting that night he arose and said : “ I must confess my deep sin. Last year I cheated a member of the church out of fourteen dollars. When accused of it before a committee of the church I stoutly denied it, claiming that all the money was expended in recovering the member’s boat which had been pirated. When I heard today of the sudden death of the church sister from Hankong so soon after she had confessed her sin, it went to my heart like a knife. I retired to my room and prayed nearly all afternoon. I thought, ‘ What if I have only four more days of life ? Shall I sell my soul for fourteen dollars ? ’ The devil has been vanquished, and I come now to confess this and all my sins, and beg forgiveness of God and the church. I will take this money and go to the member and confess to him and make restitution. ”

In the confession he did not intimate that there was a confederate, but no sooner was he seated than one who had been a junior preacher on the same circuit last year, who, by a fortunate and apparently Providential coincidence, was in this meeting, arose and confessed that he too had received as much as the other, less one dollar, and that he would go and make confession and restitution with the first. The meeting closed, and these two men spent a memorable half hour upon their knees at the Communion rail pleading for the pardon of the sins of a lifetime. Two months ago the writer would have placed these two men among the most difficult thoroughly to awaken, of the more than forty on the Hingwa City District. Of the genuineness of their repentance there seems to be no reasonable doubt, for they took their first opportunity to make good their public pledges of restitution.



SLAVES OF OPIUM SEEKING FREEDOM



XI. The Anglican Mission Shares in the Blessing

Miss Witherby, Principal of the Anglican Girls' School, brought her pupils across the city day after day to the early morning meetings, and frequently to the evening services as well. She told of a letter she had received from Miss Montfort, the lady in charge of the Anglican Girls' School at Sienyu. The pupils in that school had been for some time unusually unruly. Both foreign and Chinese teachers had been almost in despair on account of the spirit of mischief that seemed to possess the school. But one day a group of the Spirit filled girls from Miss Nicolaisen's school had come over. The Anglican girls were not at all glad to see them, and scarcely treated them civilly, indeed they were even rude. But the love of Christ constrained the visitors, and they quietly began to tell of their new joy and how it had come to them. The sequel? These girls went to prayer and confession one to another and the next day with tears sought pardon of their teachers both English and Chinese; and the whole school was transformed in an astonishingly short time.

XII. Still Further the Fire Spreads

To quote again from a letter received from the pastor at Sienyu :

“ Some time ago I wrote a letter to Rev. Harry G. Dildine at Yungchun. (This is a two days' journey beyond Sienyu, but a part of the Hinghwa Conference.) I told him of the Revival, and also sent to him a sum of money which one of our members had confessed to having obtained dishonestly from the late Rev. Thomas B. Owen. Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Dildine in which he says, ‘Your message has greatly impressed the church over here, and we have begun Revival meetings and many are confessing their sins with tears. A band of thirty or forty are going to Hinghwa City to the Pentecostal Meeting; also several of the preachers of the Presbyterian Church at Yungchun are coming.’ ”

In the same letter the Sienyu pastor tells of their having discontinued the special meetings for a few days, after their Jubilee on May 5th, in order that the workers might go out to the country stations. This they did with marked results in every instance. But a band of youthful Philips from Hinghwa City arriving at Sienyu Saturday, May 8th, urged the people who were still there to continue the special meetings themselves. The outcome is indicated by the following extract from the pastor's letter written a week later : “ The Revival has very greatly increased. Yesterday (Sunday, May 16th), the church was crowded. The voice of praise and the cry of penitent confession mingled together. There were many who came forward to praise God for salvation, but more

than one hundred men and women were confessing their sins with weeping. To our surprise the church was again full in the afternoon. The Anglican lady missionary came with her entire school. We have great hope that both churches in Sienyu will receive together the baptism of the Holy Spirit''.

This hope has been abundantly fulfilled in the weeks that followed. While the missionaries of both churches had always been the closest friends, yet for two or three years the Chinese preachers and members in Sienyu had bitterly quarreled. Our pastor's first confession had been in connection with his share in making this great stumbling block in the way of Christian progress. From this time on they held union meetings every week and both communions are sharing alike in the joy of harvest. This one precious cluster of the fruits of the Spirit is worth all the toil that the Revival has cost.

XIII. The Cost of Victory

But these are nearly all large centers, heads of districts, where there are schools, and foreign missionaries have been living and laboring for years. The real test of the possibility of the Christian conquest of China is in the village stations, where the mass of the people live, where most of the nominal Christians worship, and where the workers are all Chinese. The reports of the evangelists, preachers, students and members, given Monday, Tuesday, and even Wednesday evenings, for several weeks were of the most thrilling interest. There was no stereotyped form. Each was in its way unique and bore the stamp of reality. One thing was made very clear, *there have been no easy victories*. When the repentance of the people was superficial, these youthful Pauls said so. The Peniel wrestling of the bands when the Esaus seemed to be implacable was pathetic in the extreme. One instance, that might be multiplied indefinitely, must suffice as an illustration:

A promising young preacher from a nearby circuit arose in the meeting during the third week and told of his having tried to move his people to repentance; having utterly failed, he was driven to his knees in self-examination and prayer. He remembered that while a student he had taken a share in the division of a balance of funds left after Conference entertainment. It was only a few ten cent pieces but conscience smarted, and he made his confession, restoring more than twofold. He went back to his work and threw his whole life into it but for nearly a month apparently with no results. He had an unusually difficult situation to deal

with,—two warring factions had brought their old heathen quarrels with them into the church. He came to one of the missionaries several times to plead for prayer, and asked the church in Hinghwa City to pray. Sunday, May 23rd, was Quarterly Meeting there. In spite of the pouring rain a number of the students went. The district superintendent, Rev. Li Diong-sui, told the story on the following Monday: Saturday afternoon was spent in personal house to house work by preachers and students. In the evening no perceptible impression had been made. Two or three of the leaders of the opposing factions were labored with until midnight by a student preacher, who reported to the superintendent that there seemed to be no hope at all. At daylight the little band gathered for prayer, realizing that the case was beyond man's power. The nine o'clock meeting, in this case miscalled "Love-feast", was even more discouraging, and Mr. Li went into the pulpit from an agony of secret prayer. At the close of the sermon, a boy eleven years old began weeping and confessing that he had gambled, stolen, lied, disobeyed parents and teachers,—a very calendar of crime for one so young; but it was all true, and is true of Chinese boys in general. The poor child continued in this state for over an hour. And still, with one or two exceptions, these men seemed immovable; however, their faces showed that a struggle was going on within. They had scarcely assembled in the afternoon when the whole company broke down in weeping and confession. The victory was so complete that not a trace of the enemy remained in sight. Not only was the sin of enmity removed, but sins of every kind, up to their light, seemed to go with it.

Dr. A. B. Earle, a noted New England evangelist of a quarter of a century ago, said in his old age, "I have seen and worked in hundreds of Revivals, but have never yet known an easy one". There are no easy conquests over Satan. His power is only less than God's omnipotence. Every one of these victories in the little country village chapels, as well as in the larger centers, is won in some such tragic way as this in the obscure hamlet of Botau.

XIV. A Converted Bandit

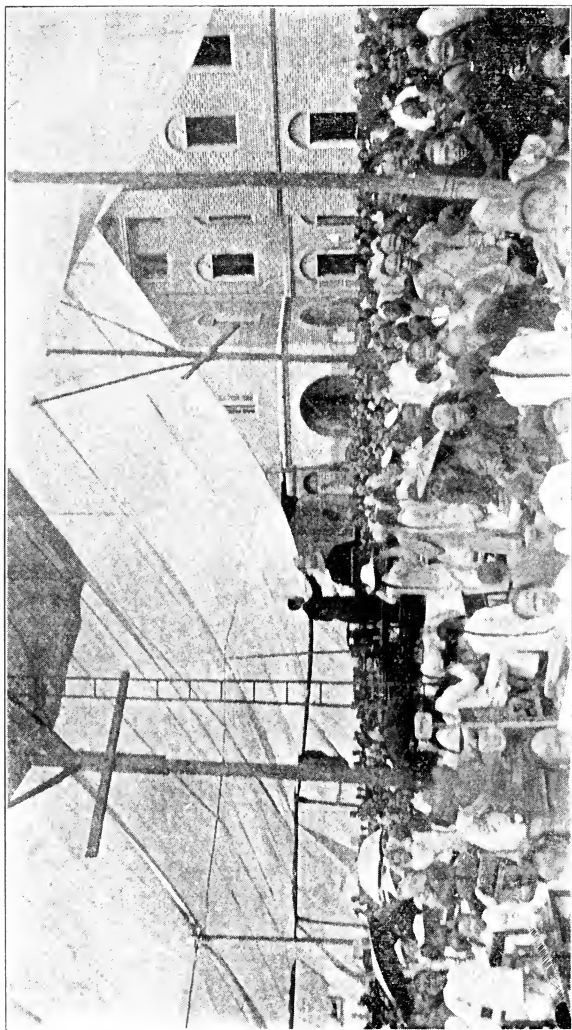
On Sunday, May 23rd, a student band was at Kio-sauh, an old station at a big market town, a veritable "seat of Satan". Here a man, who had been the head of a large and widely spread secret organization called the "Guan and Knife Society", had joined the church on probation a year ago. He had been the dictator in village and clan fights of his neighborhood. He had already broken off with his old life when he united with the church—reformed but unrepentant. His wife was just like him in character. On this Sunday these two were brought to deepest penitence. They had, indeed, enough to grieve over! As a pledge of his sincerity, he brought the long chain which he had used to bind the men seized by this terrible society, while holding them for ransom or revenge. As scores had done his bidding in sin, may he not lead many of these people in righteousness? He is now going everywhere with his pastor, preaching Christ. It is in such displays of divine power and mercy that the missionary of the Cross rests his faith that the world is indeed to be conquered by his King.

XV. The Pentecost

Fifty days of twice daily meetings had prepared the large company who came together expecting great things from God. For two weeks it had rained daily and almost incessantly. It seemed like folly to put up a tabernacle of flimsy muslin, only strong enough to hold itself together when there was neither wind nor rain. Yet preparation went quietly forward as though the weather was subject to our order. And lo! Thursday morning, May 27th, dawned bright and clear, a cool north breeze was proof that the atmosphere was wrung dry. The weather was simply ideal from first to last, suited to our frail canvas; a slight breeze on Saturday did the only damage and that was soon repaired. The wind was indeed tempered to the shorn lamb.

The people came by the thousand, where we had at first expected hundreds. The delegates were in the minority, a majority being visitors who paid all their own expenses. The seats were so close together that it was necessary to stand in prayer. The congregation of Saturday night was counted, and numbered four thousand eight hundred. Sunday night there were four simultaneous meetings aggregating between six and seven thousand. Many non-Christians, commonly called "heathen," were in these audiences, but the order was little short of perfect. No policemen were used, and none were needed. A marked spirit of reverence on the part of all classes characterized every service.

In planning the program, the committee instinctively felt that it was no time for great platform or pulpit "efforts". The leader was to hide behind the Cross, and prayer and



THE EARLY MORNING PRAYER MEETING

testimony were to be the chief features of every service. Beginning with Friday, for five successive mornings, at half past five o'clock, from two to three thousand Chinese Christian men and women gathered for prayer. It is impossible by any pen picture to give one an adequate conception of these early meetings. Each leader seemed to have a message direct from the Shekinah. There were pleas for prayer from burdened hearts. After the leader had reviewed five or six requests, the great audience would stand and pray. And such praying! Three thousand voices blended into one. At a little distance it sounded like the roar of a storm swept forest, and again it sobbed as the breakers on a rocky coast. Yet there was no confusion; it was orderly, harmonious noise. The writer has paused many times to listen to the prayers of those near by, and in every case each worshipper was evidently oblivious of all else, and praying definitely and importunately for immediate needs. The custom of studying aloud in schools doubtless accounts in part for this unique and impressive phenomenon in nearly all Oriental revivals. As the voices died down, usually one specially led of the Spirit would continue the petition, leading the now silent congregation in a brief direct plea for the things they had been unitedly bearing to the throne of grace. The entire season of prayer would not last more than from five to seven minutes, but the very atmosphere seemed charged with divine power.

Each one of those five early meetings had its own peculiar place and work in the series, and each seemed indispensable; but the one on Saturday was epoch-making. It had been arranged by the committee that this morning

would be a time of fasting. Breakfast was served only to those who had handed in their names the day before. The pastor of Hinghwa City was the human leader, but the Holy Spirit spoke in all that was said. Those terrible words of the prophet Joel were read, and applied with the faithfulness of love : "Gird yourselves with sackcloth, and lament, ye priests . . . Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. . . . and cry unto the Lord Yet even now, saith the Lord, turn ye unto me with all your heart, with weeping and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God." The modern prophet told of his own sins, as well as those of his people. He confessed to having secretly earned eighty dollars two years ago, by teaching English to several literary men, while he was drawing full salary from the Missionary Society. He buried three of his children in that one year, and he took this unspeakable bereavement as a visitation of Providence to bring him to repentance, that all his powers might be used for the prophet's task of calling men from sin to righteousness. The awed multitude sat as at the foot of Sinai, and were melted into tears as the preacher led them on to Calvary. As no one went to breakfast, the meeting continued until nearly eight o'clock. Confession of sin and deepest penitence were manifest everywhere. Shallow repentance was inexcusable, almost impossible, after this memorable hour.

The forenoon meetings on Friday and Saturday were given largely to hearing the story of the work of the Holy Spirit during the past fifty days in the various districts. There was no boasting. Every speaker seemed to be so keenly conscious that the work was of God,

that the human element appeared to be almost eliminated. It was a wonderful story, told in simple language, with no attempt at oratory. From every section the same thrilling scenes were described. Here were the proofs, "the fruits meet for repentance," that none could gainsay nor resist. "Unrighteous money" amounting to more than five hundred dollars had been returned or given to charity, and the value of goods of various kinds probably equalled the money. Here was a bunch of balls made of cotton yarn, that the little folks, boys and girls, brought, because they had played with them on Sunday. The pastor told them to take the balls back and not play with them on Sunday any more; but no persuasion could induce them to receive these balls again. They had been used in breaking the fourth commandment, and the children would rather make new ones, begin over again their new life of obedience in play as in work. And who shall say that the repentance of these little ones was not as acceptable to the Father as the heart-rending confessions of any of their parents? There were dozens of brass pipes, not a few of which came from village parsonages, telling the story of broken vows, a double life, and weakened power in sacred service. There was shown a bottle of poison, which an official member had given up, confessing with an agony of grief to having prepared it, waiting for a favorable opportunity to put a certain enemy out of his way. Here was the chain above mentioned, and the reformed brigand was there, who in deep contrition told of his past, of his repentance and joy in conscious pardon from Him whose last words on the Cross spoke peace to such an one as he.

Oh, it was indeed a wonderful story they had to tell, bearing upon its face everywhere the marks of divine power. Almost any section of it might have been slipped into Saint Luke's account of the Acts of the Holy Spirit as performed by the Apostles, and not seem incongruous with the context.

XVI. The Story of the Lower Chamber

But it was not in the great congregation that the epoch-making work of this Pentecostal Meeting was accomplished. In planning the program, the committee provided two special meetings for preachers alone, to be held in the chapel on the ground floor of the Anglo-Chinese School. How little that committee realized the inadequacy of this provision of time may be understood by the sequel: approximately one hundred and twenty disciples during four days awaited the promise of the Father in this lower chamber, holding nine different sessions, aggregating not less than sixteen hours. Every possible section of each day that could be spared from the tabernacle meetings was jealously coveted by these earnest men. Four times on Pentecostal Sunday alone they met for not less than two hours each, and every moment was precious. Never was less time wasted by silence or by rambling talk. What could have so absorbed their interest from day to day? Let us slip in quietly at the first hour and take the only vacant seat near the door. The leader is just beginning a short exposition of Genesis, the fourteenth and part of the fifteenth chapters, the story of how Abram with his armed retinue and few confederates overtook the five kings, and brought back not only his nephew Lot and family, but all the captives and spoils of Sodom. The king of Sodom asks for the rescued captives and offers to Abram the loot. The grand old hero replies: "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoelatchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I

have made Abram rich." To this audience an application of so plain a message is hardly necessary. They know the constant temptation of the preacher in China to use his relation with the foreigner to aid people in and out of the church in disputes and lawsuits, for which often a fee may be offered, as were these spoils of Sodom. But accepting such gifts puts God's chosen representative in a position of compromise that shears him of his power with God and with man. God set his seal of approval upon Abram's refusal, for "After these things the Word of the *Lord* came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." The old sheik refused the paltry riches of a pagan city, and was rewarded by receiving God himself! And as though even that were not enough: "He brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou art able to number them: and He said unto him, so shall thy seed be. . . . And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." Abram changed the wretched tawdry of Sodom for Jehovah Himself and seed as the stars for multitude and the whole land of Canaan for a possession. Such will be the reward, the rich spiritual inheritance, of God's own chosen prophets in this Canaan, if they, too, will keep hands clean and hearts free from the spoils.

Immediately, preacher after preacher begins to confess the sin of having received fees of this kind. Some of them have previously told it before their own people and given up the money, but repeat the story here in the presence of their brethren. After three or four such confessions,

the company kneels in prayer: and such praying! it besieges the throne, it will not be denied, yet it pleads nothing but the mercy of God and the redemption of the Cross. The time is exhausted. Four or five are on the floor waiting their turn. The next possible available hour is announced for the following meeting, and the company quietly passes out. The appointed hour has come. There is scarcely time for a hymn. The floor is claimed by those standing at the last adjournment. Awakened consciences unearth many sins. Wine drinking and smoking are among the most frequent. Social customs and the mildest kind of liquor and tobacco, have made these vows of abstinence rest lightly upon many. One man confesses to having drunk rice wine frequently even to intoxication.

The big man with the strong earnest face who arises from the front seat, and facing the company quietly awaits his turn, is the Sienyu district superintendent. After perhaps a quarter of an hour he has a chance to say: "More than a month ago, before my own people, I confessed my sin of receiving a fee of eight dollars. I paid the money back, and obtained pardon and peace. God has cleansed my heart, but now I will wash my hands." He then gives details of two transactions while he was superintendent of the Hinghwa City district in which he accepted fees, and he tells the company, many of whom are preachers of his own district, how he plans to give back that money and thus "wash his hands." The vice-principal of the Bible School secures the floor "on a question of privilege," just before adjournment, and tells how he has been using the school kerosene oil in his family for several years. He estimates

the approximate value, and announces his purpose to reimburse the school.

Many of these sums are "unrighteous" only to the most enlightened conscience. At the time they were received, there was often no deliberate sin. It was in no sense swindling. To the Chinese mind it was perfectly legitimate gain; but in this white light of the Holy Spirit, the shady character of the money and the hindrance it was to their work stands out in bold relief, and strong men are smitten with deep conviction for these very acts which they had once condoned.

Sitting here in this solemn presence hour after hour, day after day, looking into these serious faces, some drawn and white with great beads of perspiration standing on brows showing too plainly the inward struggle between pride and conscience, we can never again doubt the realities of the Judgment Day nor the hell of an accusing conscience. Not one word of threatening exhortation is uttered from first to last, and none is needed. We are reminded of that promise of the Master: "When the Holy Spirit is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment."

Nothing diverts the attention nor turns aside these men from the fixed purpose they have formed to rid their hearts of the burden of sin, and their lives of its guilt. Bishop Lewis, who had returned for this Pentecostal meeting, slips quietly in and takes a seat beside a missionary, that he may be told in English what is going on. No stronger proof could be offered of the depth of the Holy Spirit's work than the fact that his coming seems scarcely to be noticed, and no better evidence is needed of how this great loving soul has at once won the confidence of his brothers in yellow than the

fact that they lay bare their hearts in his presence even as in his absence. A pale determined face rises near the front. It is that of one of the ablest, proudest, and most erring in the Conference. He begins at childhood and tells of his early disobedience to parents, both of whom died while he was still a child; then rapidly through early manhood into the ministry and details of a serious fall for which he was suspended for a year. He confesses his sins of pride and falsehood, even of once breaking the seventh commandment. The story is ended, the pallid face lightens, the drawn lines relax, and the angel of peace wipes the cold sweat from his brow. This is victory. The proudest heart has become,

“A broken and emptied vessel,
For the Master’s use made meet.”

“What would happen, Bishop, if one of the great Annual Conferences in America would meet in this way for four days, confessing their sins one to another, and praying one for another?”

“It would set the whole country on fire,” said Bishop Lewis.

Another adjourned meeting has assembled. All claimants to the floor give way, with the un-failing Chinese courtesy, to make place for the guests from Foochow. A delegation of six had responded to the earnest invitation extended to all who would come. The difference in dialect does not trouble the first to speak, who is the senior in age and in office, for he had spent several years in Hinghwa as pastor and teacher when the two Conferences were one. His humble confession tells of “the sin that doth so easily beset,” where constant employment in the purchase of many pieces of mission property and

supervision of building enterprises had furnished temptation that had not been resisted. He expresses his determination to pay back much more than the unrighteous money that he had received, and with it rededicate his life to the service of Christ without reserve. He had learned by sad experience the truth of those terrible words, "Ye can not serve God and Mammon." The younger Foochow guests follow from time to time until their joy breaks out in a joint telegram sent to their associates in Foochow telling as fully as the wires would express their own victory and urging that meetings begin at once at Foochow. (This was done, the meetings continuing for more than two weeks, until the close of the schools, and with great blessing, which we all take as but the earnest of the Spirit that is to be poured out when the seven hundred students of this great educational center reassemble in the autumn.)

It is hard to secure any time from these eager penitents for further lessons of Scripture; but a few minutes are seized by the leader on Saturday to take them a step further. In the vision and call of Isaiah, the young prophet, standing in the immediate presence of Jehovah, is overwhelmed with a sense of the pollution of his lips. Long after the outward sins of the body are abandoned, the uncleanness of lying, scolding, gossiping lips eateth as a canker. Only the presence of the Holy One makes manifest the long indulged impurity of the lips. Under the new light not a few desire to confess again the sins they had failed to express at the first opportunity. A friendly altercation takes place. They dispute regarding the question whether one who has already had the floor once should be given another such privilege before one who

has not spoken at all. The company mutually agrees that the first chance should be the last until all others who so desire have told their story. Henceforth, only as a "question of high privilege," and by common consent, can one secure the floor a second time until all have unloaded their burden. Happy indeed is that church and that people whose pastors' only question for dispute is as to the one to whom shall be given first the coveted privilege of confessing his sins to his brethren that they may be forgiven !

As the time planned for closing the meeting approaches, there is a perceptible increase in this jealous guarding of the moments that seem all too few. Very infrequently one takes occasion to make excuses, or to confess one sin for himself and two for his neighbor; or he generalizes, using a vivid Chinese expression to the effect that he "has broken eleven of the ten commandments," but failing to mention any particular instance. About that time from one to half a dozen of these brethren, with perfect good humor, remind the speaker that several others are waiting their turn, and that unless he has some sins to confess he would better give way for others who have. Usually it proves to be the needed spur to bring the hesitating brother to the point from which he shrank. It is a warm place for the man who is not prepared to make a clean breast of it. They all know each other too well to be deceived by any "refuge of lies."

And now it is Pentecostal Sunday. Is this the last day? How can we finish our task? Every moment is golden. We are not needed in, nor will we be missed from, the early tabernacle meeting; so we begin the day in the

“lower chamber.” After the great meeting in the tabernacle, where Bishop Lewis preached at nine o’clock, we have two hours till noon, and we hasten back to await the promise of the Father. The afternoon Sacramental service is over before four o’clock, and there are yet two hours till dusk; when, interrupted only by the evening meal, we continue the fourth service till nine o’clock. All are here except the few leaders who have charge of other simultaneous meetings.

What could keep these men for eight hours in one day in this dingy room, unconscious of the flight of time, unwearied in body? One graphically describes it: “We are standing here around a burning fiery furnace, throwing our sins into it by the armful, that they may be burned up forever.”

And now it is evening. Shall Pentecost go by and the promise remain unfulfilled? Yet there is no impatient inquiry: “Why doth the Lord delay His coming?” The intensely practical type of mind in the Chinese is shown even in these most deeply religious exercises. They instinctively attribute the delay to their own failure to meet the conditions of the promise, not to the Father’s failure to fulfill. The Holy Spirit has one more message for these eager listeners before the promised Comforter can do His appointed work. One of the commonest of life’s paradoxes is that the points of greatest strength of every character are closely allied with the sources of danger and failure in that character. Passion is love with the breaks off; tyranny is firmness gone to seed. The Chinese habit of thrift, cultivated by milleniums of ancestral worship and consequent self-centeredness in the family weal, is one of

the prime sources of temptation to the Chinese preacher of the Word. He considers provision for his old age as a duty, and starting from that premise, he sees nothing wrong in looking after his temporal affairs between Sundays, often to the neglect of his pastoral duties. Can these men, who have been facing for days their sins of commission be brought to see the equal guilt of the sins of omission? Can the searchlight of the Holy Spirit reveal as sin in the prophet of God that which is even virtue in the ordinary believer? Surely only a direct message from the Holy of Holies could be of avail here.

Paul's word to Timothy seems to be the only fitting text: "No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." Many things are right, even bounden duty, for the ordinary citizen, that would be little short of treason in the soldier. Not for the first time does the messenger find that the message is first to himself and then to the hundred and twenty. He tells them of his own cherished plans to build a house in the American college town where his children are being educated. It seemed perfectly right to do so. For the next two decades one or more of the seven will be there. It would cost more in rent than to build. Borrowing on security of the property, the amount of the rent would more than cover interest, and this surplus, with what could be added by saving, in a few years would pay off the principal. When ready to retire, here would be a comfortable home, free from debt, in which to enjoy a green old age. These plans had been carefully and, as he thought, prayerfully matured. But as the Spirit applied

these ringing words of the Apostle, he had said to himself: "What if the house we propose to build should burn down? It cannot be insured for its full value, and while rebuilding there is rent to pay, and interest does not stop. Would not I be 'entangled in the affairs of this life'? There are cyclones in America. Suppose one strikes my house? even that mortgage would not be heavy enough to hold it down! Or even allowing that the best possible happens, and there are no disasters of any kind, I will be burdened with this debt,—enshadowed by it. At every turn in this great spiritual campaign, when the sinews of war are running short, and I see where a little more ammunition at the critical moment insures victory, while the lack of it may mean defeat, the payments due upon this house will tie my hands. I will be 'entangled in the affairs of this life.' But that is the smallest part of the tethering. When I see one of these soldiers in the ranks becoming entangled, and I, as captain, go to him with this message from the Great Commander, how idle will be the words! He will be too polite to say so, but his inmost thought will be: 'The foreign teacher talks beautifully, but he, too, is feathering his own nest; and why should not I?' This is worse than entanglement, it is throttling the messenger of God. Others may do this without sin. I judge no one, but in my peculiar relation to large numbers of Chinese preachers, I cannot." The leader rehearses this soliloquy, and tells them that on the previous night (Saturday), he had slipped away from the meeting in the tabernacle where he was not needed, and wrote to his wife this change of their mutual plans, and why. He testifies to the joy and peace the victory gave

“No home in old age ! Even earthly governments provide comfortable homes for their worn out veterans ; and shall the King of kings and Lord of lords be less considerate toward two old soldiers of the Cross who, for the sake of Him who enrolled them as soldiers, have kept themselves free from entanglement in the affairs of this life, that they might please Him ?

“Not much of a sermon,” we think ; and we are right. It is just a testimony. But it is also a message, for during this memorable hour, scores of these practical, hard-headed Chinese Christian soldiers covenant with the Captain of their Salvation that they will henceforth hold the great conquest, in which He leads and in which they are enrolled, to be their one business in life, and trust the Commissariat for their supplies. Not until this last citadel of the heart surrenders do these serious faces begin to glow. There is no “rushing mighty wind,” there is no marked demonstration of any kind, but we are conscious that they now begin to speak with other tongues, and it is the Spirit that gives them utterance. The day of Pentecost is indeed come.

XVII. The Last Great Day of the Feast

According to the original program, the Pentecostal Meeting was to close with the five o'clock meeting Monday morning ; but early on Sunday it became manifest that this would be premature. Bishop Lewis and another friend, hearing of this, generously offered to meet the expense of the additional day's entertainment.

There were four simultaneous meetings Sunday night. That of the preachers in the school chapel has been already described. The tabernacle was full ; a thousand were in the church ; and several hundred women were in the large chapel of the Girls' Boarding School. What took place in the "lower chamber" on that memorable Pentecostal Sunday night must have been duplicated in greater or less measure in all of these meetings. Monday morning a great company assembled in the tabernacle at five o'clock, and upon entering one instantly realized that something extraordinary had taken place. Even to one without a knowledge of the language, this was apparent.

"Do you realize the new note in the prayers and testimonies this morning?" was asked of Bishop Lewis.

"Yes, I do; and it is even deeper than the burden for sin of the previous day."

How describe this "new note"? There were tears,—even more than before. There was sorrow, there was burden, no lighter than the first. But the tears and the sorrow were not for themselves. The burden was not one of their own guilt. The whole company seemed to have forgotten themselves in agony of soul for their unsaved relatives and neighbors. Not one in that vast

congregation but had near relatives who were still in pagan darkness ; not a house represented but adjoined others where idols were worshipped instead of God. These three thousand seemed to be carrying the three million Christless souls of Hinghwa upon their hearts ;—one to a thousand, what wonder that they were well nigh to breaking ! This hour was a blessed omen that these, who had been so filled at this feast of tabernacles, would not keep their loaves and fishes to themselves, but would break and give to all the hungry multitudes about them.

But He who knoweth how frail we are, graciously lifted the burden as the day advanced. One prominent layman from Sienyu, who at the early meeting had been in deepest distress for his family, at the forenoon service told of his having served as a juniour preacher for two years while a young man. He had not been faithful then, nor had his ministry been fruitful. He had then gone into business, and God had prospered him. He declared his purpose to give back to the church, for some good object, the whole of the salary he had received during these two years, as a sin-offering for his unfaithfulness and a thank-offering for God's mercies.

At ten o'clock the representatives of each of the five districts met separately under the presidency of their respective superintendents and planned the evangelistic campaign that was to follow. This was done with the utmost thoroughness. No part of the field was to be overlooked. Before the summer is past, every village station is to be the center of a Pentecostal meeting, in spirit and purpose like this, only in miniature. They did not seem to think about vacations, though it was now the first day of June, and we are in the latitude of southern Florida. The farmer does not plan to take his "outing" right

in harvest time, simply because the weather is hottest then, and why should these reapers leave the dead ripe grain to rot in the fields until cool weather comes again? The peasant's harvest is at least once a year, and in this region three times; but here is a reaping for which God and men have toiled and waited for half a century. The limit of labor now is found, not by consulting the almanac nor the thermometer, but in the power of endurance. Not one man nor woman in all that company of Chinese Christians but seemed to think: "We shall yet see greater things than these: the Holy Spirit has only begun His work amongst us; and now is the accepted time."

The preachers met again, for the last time, at two o'clock. It was a joyous but a subdued company that told of victory dearly won and of responsibility keenly felt. Again at four o'clock in the tabernacle the multitudes gathered to hear the plans adopted for the summer campaign, and to pledge their most earnest co-operation. Not once in all these four days had one been heard to speak of his coming here "seeking a blessing." Relief from the load of sin seemed to be the first cry of every heart, and then for power to unburden others. So that the joy was of the kind that satisfies but does not inflate. There was no hysteria; no noise of any kind, except in prayer of thanksgiving and short victorious testimonies. These culminated in the Praise Meeting of Monday evening, when hundreds testified, almost constantly a dozen speaking simultaneously in different parts of the great tent, and yet there was no confusion. It all seemed orderly and unto edification, for the Holy Spirit was the Leader.

Even here the intensely practical type of the Chinese mind was strikingly illustrated. On this Monday more than twenty victims of opium

had applied for help to break their chains. They had heard the witness of the score or more who already had been saved. The men uniformly declared that prayer had helped them even more than the medical aid of skillful physicians. The cost for medical treatment for each case was one dollar and a half, the patient providing his own food. Evidently here was a great and effectual door opened before us. That Niagara of praise was turned into a Power plant by these spiritual utilitarians, and in a short time five hundred and eighty dollars were subscribed for opium refuge work, enough to pay the cost of reforming four hundred men. Let a country camp meeting in America raise, in a few minutes, six thousand dollars for an anti-saloon campaign, and it would represent less self-sacrifice than this subscription in China. Quite a number of men gave fully a month's salary or earnings, and in most cases these same men habitually put a full tithe into the regular benevolences of the church, and they will not decrease their usual offerings because of this special one.

Even to the last, there was this practical note in every service. The closing session, before breakfast Tuesday morning, was a time of covenanting. The viciousness of the practice of selling daughters in marriage, so universal in China, was emphasized, and many pledged themselves that they would put it away. Large numbers agreed to make peace with their non-Christian neighbors at any cost of "face," as soon as they returned home. None who have not lived in China can appreciate fully what fulfillment of such a pledge may mean. And so with hearts full of praise, giving wings to their faith, yet with feet upon the solid ground, the great meeting closed, and "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."

XVIII. Concluding Observations

There are a few marked characteristics of this modern Pentecost which it may be well to emphasize in closing this extremely inadequate account :

1. There was *no prearranged plan*, no program to be carried out. No evangelist had been sent for. It was the work of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Even after the meetings were in full swing, they were planned for only from day to day. Seldom were leaders appointed more than two days in advance, and they were not publicly announced even from one meeting to another. The people did not come to hear some favorite preacher, but to be taught of God by whomsoever He chose to use as a messenger. Even in arranging for the great tabernacle meeting, while committees were at work for weeks preparing for entertainment, and a tentative outline of the subjects for the various days and hours was made a month before the time, yet the particular leaders for each meeting were not decided upon until just a few days before the gathering of the assembly. All realized that the preparation should be chiefly one of heart by prayer, and the less conspicuous the human element, the mightier the Divine Presence.

2. There has been *deep conviction for sin*, usually followed by more or less public confession. Sometimes sins were confessed in public that, from our point of view, might better have been told simply to God and to the persons immediately concerned. Personally the writer recalls only one instance where a woman—and she past fifty years of age—confessed in a mixed



A GROUP OF THE LEADERS IN HINGHWA CITY

company to violating the seventh commandment. No doubt there were other cases, but in the main such confessions were at meetings for women only. Care was taken to explain the scriptural and logical grounds for confession, that it should be as wide as the offence, and need not go further. However, in most cases the public confession seemed to be the only way for the burdened soul to find relief. It must be borne in mind that these confessions were educational in value to others, as well as spiritually helpful to the penitent. Great numbers were brought under conviction of sin by hearing others confessing to deeds of which they themselves were guilty. God wished to use these confessions to save others, and He would not give the sought for peace until the service of public confession had been rendered.

3. There has been *very little physical prostration*, or *demonstration* of any kind. This has been almost entirely absent in Hinghwa City. In Sienyu there has been more. Such scenes as are so vividly portrayed by writers on the revivals in Manchuria and Korea, where large numbers have fallen to the ground, have not taken place in these meetings anywhere. There have been two cases of temporary mental unbalancing, but rest and skillful treatment were effective in one case. Of the other, the writer has not heard the outcome. Both of these cases were in Sienyu.

4. Little has been said thus far regarding the *human instrumentalities* which God has used in this work. The fact is that there is little that need be said. The preaching has been done almost entirely by the Chinese. Even in Hinghwa City not more than one meeting in six has been led by a foreign missionary. These

Chinese evangelists have developed remarkable insight into spiritual things. In all the more than fifty days, with upward of one hundred meetings, the writer did not note more than two or three where the leader seemed to be out of touch with the situation, and where the theme and the treatment of it were inopportune. When we consider that a dozen different preachers and teachers led these meetings without any pre-arranged plan, it is evident that the Holy Spirit was the leader, or there would have been confusion worse confounded. The leader was not expected to occupy more than twenty minutes. The most effective speeches were the broken accents of penitent sinners, sobbing out their sad story, and the united prayer of the congregation, carrying the petition for pardon right to the Throne. When asked by semi-sympathetic friends: Will this Revival last?" our reply is: "We cannot prophesy as to that; but we do know that it bears so many of the marks of being a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, that we must believe that much permanent fruit will remain, if we believe in the Holy Spirit at all".

5. As in all genuine Revivals, *Prayer has been the secret of power*. Over and over again, at times of crisis, the leaders have been driven to their closets. Fasting has not been by the almanac nor the clock, but the prayer of intercession leaves no place for physical hunger until the soul is satisfied.

But not only in China has the Spirit of God laid the intercessory burden upon His children. Twelve thousand miles from the scenes of this Pentecost, and weeks before that eventful Good Friday, in the town of Houston, Texas, in the inner chamber of an aged saint, the battle was

already fought and the victory assured. Mrs. Sarah A. Wilson, the mother of our senior worker of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Miss Minnie E. Wilson, partly from the natural infirmities of age, and still more from almost total deafness, has been isolated from general society for several years. In the summer of 1906, she was so ill that they cabled for her daughter to come home. She partially recovered, and in about a year and a half Miss Wilson was permitted to return to her labor of love. But the mother's heart has been with the daughter unceasingly, and much of the time of her blessed leisure has been spent in prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church in Hinghwa and in all China. Letter after letter last winter told of this burden of prayer. As the weeks passed there began to be a tone of victory. At last, a letter dated March 23rd, 1909, told of prevailing faith: "I have been praying much, especially for over a year, that the Spirit might be poured out in awakening, convicting, converting and sanctifying power. I feel like it must come for His sake. *It may come to you before my letter gets there* My soul has got so full I had to quit writing and praise the Lord our God, and then pray awhile, before I could write more." This letter reached the daughter three weeks after that memorable anniversary of our Saviour's Passion and was written nearly as long before that day, when no one in China, unless it be the equally burdened Chinese pastor of Hinghwa city, apparently expected any such immediate blessing from God.

Oh, ye bed-ridden saints, ye blessed shut-ins, ye privileged veterans and superannuates, who think your days of usefulness are o'er

enter into your rich inheritance! You alone, in this rushing age seem to have time to wait upon God, to “wrestle till the break of day,” to hold on by faith until you prevail.

Sometimes we are tempted to think that the world might be saved if only we had sufficient funds. It is not so. How often our best friends lament that they have not money to give. Have you the prayer of intercession? Do you know this secret of the Lord? If not, would you learn to serve in this ministry? Will you not give us this? ‘Tis greater worth than prayerless millions.

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